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ON A NEW GENUS OF LOPHOBRANCHIATE FISHES.

BY E. D. COPE.

Osphyolax pellucidus, gen. et sp. nov. Plate 25.

Char. Gen.—Pectoral fins wanting; tail subcylindric. Body covered with thin, weakly keeled scuta, which have on the lumbar region free superior edges, which form a series of longitudinal lateral grooves. The lateral dorsal scuta produced upwards, and approximated on the middle line, inclosing a tube for a distance anterior to the dorsal fin. Dorsal fin short, above the vent. No ventral nor caudal pouch; caudal fin rudimental in the typical species. No adipose fins.

This genus is related to *Nerophis*, but is different from known forms in its curious dorsal tube. What the purpose of this can be is uncertain, but the strong lateral channels below it on each side, are probably an adaptation for the carrying of the eggs. In the type species, the dorsal tube is closed above by a series of small radiate ossicles in the median line, between which the cavity may be entered by small bodies. The same specimen displays a narrow, free, dermal membrane on the middle lines of the upper and lower surfaces from the thoracic to the beginning of the lumbar region.

Char. Specif.—Three longitudinal series of scuta on each side of the body, and one on the middle line below. They are rounded at the intersecting angles, thus leaving a vacancy, which is covered by a small, round scale. Each scute with a low median keel, from which delicate transverse ridges diverge. The two lower lateral series are the ones which form the lumbar grooves. Two nuchal scuta. Parietal and frontal regions impressed punctate; operculum radiate; sides of muzzle smooth. Thirty-one transverse rows of scuta. Dorsal radii sixteen. Total length .232 m.; length to vent, .117; to edge of operculum, .020; to orbit, .010. Color in spirits pellucid, the back tinged with brownish.

Obtained by Captain J. Mortimer in the open Atlantic Ocean.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE.

- Fig. 1. *Osphyolax pellucidus*.
“ 2. Head of the same from above.
“ 3. Dorsal line in front of dorsal fin.
“ 4. Lateral lumbar region.
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